

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing Amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 42, 43, 45-72 are pending in the application.

Applicants are pleased to note that claims 1, 43, 45-48, 50-59, 63, 66, 68-70, 71/1 and 72/1 are allowed.

Applicants have previously submitted the U.S. Patent No. 6,016,228 to Uzawa, which is assigned to the assignee of the instant application, in an Information Disclosure Statement filed on September 5, 2002. Applicants direct the Examiner's attention to column 9, lines 58+ of U.S. Patent No. 6,016,228, i.e. "In Examples 1, 2, and 6-9, the negative lens in the second lens group G2 and the positive lens therein, which is located on the object side, are located with an air separation between them. However, these lenses may be cemented together to form a doublet."

To distinguish over this teaching in U.S. Patent No. 6,016,228, Applicants have amended claims 57, 58, 60 and 66 in the Amendment filed April 21, 2003.

Furthermore, claims 71 and 72 depend from each of the independent claims 1, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 56, 57, 58 and 59. Claims 71 and 72 recite the third or second lens group moves constantly. Without the limitation "constantly" in the claims, the third or second lens group may change direction near the wide-angle end or the telephoto end, or somewhere during zooming.

**Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103**

The Examiner rejected claims 42, 45, 46 and 49 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mihara (U.S. Patent No. 4,818,083) in view of Mukaiya et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,178,049).

Applicants have amended claims 42, 45, 46 and 49 to further recite "said fourth lens group consists of one lens component." The amendment to claims 42, 45, 46 and 49 obviate the above rejection. Support for the added limitation may be found throughout the initial disclosure. For example, the Examiner is directed to page 12, lines 15-18. By providing a fourth lens group consisting of one lens component, the zoom lens recited in claims 42, 45, 46 and 49 is rendered more compact.

In contrast, the fourth lens group of Mihara et al. has more than one lens component. In fact, the fourth lens group of Mihara et al. has three lens elements (see Figures 1-12 in Mihara et al.). Similarly, the fourth lens group of Mukaiya et al. has more than one lens component (see Figures 1-9 in Mukaiya et al.). Consequently, neither Mihara et al. nor Mukaiya et al. disclose, teach or suggest, alone or in combination, *inter-alia*, "the fourth lens group consists of one lens component," as recited in claims 42, 45, 46 and 49.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 42, 45, 46 and 49 are patentable and respectfully request that the rejection of claims 42, 45, 46 and 49 under § 103(a) be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 42, 60-62, 71/42, 72/42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka (U.S. Patent No. 4,842,385) in view of Mukaiya et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,178,049).

Claims 42, 61, 62 and 67 now recite, *inter-alia*, "said fourth lens group consists of one lens component." Claim 60 now recites, *inter-alia*, "a fourth lens group consisting of one positive single lens convex on an object side thereof."

In contrast, the fourth lens group in Tanaka has more than one lens component (see Figure 3 in Tanaka et al.). As stated above, the fourth lens group in Mukaiya et al. also has more than one lens component. Therefore, neither Tanaka nor Mukaiya et al., alone or in combination, disclose, teach or suggest a fourth lens group consisting of one lens component, as recited in claims 42, 60, 61, 62 and 67.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 42, 60-62 and 67, and claims 71 and 72 which depend from claim 42, are patentable and respectfully request that the rejection of claims 42, 60-62, 67, 71/42 and 72/42 under § 103(a) be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 64 and 65 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Misaka (U.S. Patent No. 5,859,729) in view of Mukaiya et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,178,049).

Claims 64 and 65 now recite, *inter-alia*, "said third lens group consists of three lenses, a positive lens, a positive lens and a bi-concave negative lens." By providing a third lens group with three lenses, a positive lens, a positive lens and bi-

concave lens, the zoom system of claims 64 and 65 is made more compact and the overall power of zooming is increased without varying its image-forming magnification (see page 13, lines 14-25 of the specification).

In contrast, the Examiner noted in the Office Action dated July 8, 2003, the third lens group of Misaka et al. simply has two lenses: a positive lens and a negative lens. The third lens group of Mukaiya et al. has either two lenses (see Figures 4-8 in Mukaya et al.) or four lenses (see Figures 1-3 and 9 in Mukaya et al.). Consequently, neither Misaka et al. nor Mukaya et al. disclose, teach or suggest, *inter-alia*, "said third lens group consists of three lenses, a positive lens, a positive lens and a bi-concave negative lens," as recited in claims 64 and 65.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 64 and 65 are patentable and respectfully request that the rejection of claims 64 and 65 under § 103(a) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

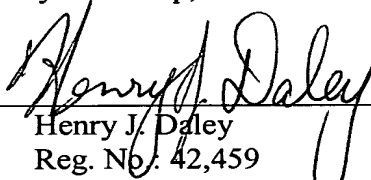
In view of the foregoing, the claims are now in form for allowance, and such action is hereby solicited. If any point remains in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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